

## **Montana DEQ and EPA Region 8:**

A Joint Project for Utilizing STORET Effectively

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Submitted by:

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Limited State resources were combined with Federal resource to fund this project. Local and Regional EPA staff, and Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MT DEQ) Data Management staff combined expertise to develop a strategy for best use of available funding to improve utilization of the STORET database. Project team considered the full cycle of data management, and data analysis to determine where best to apply resource.

The resulting project had 5 task-based components:

1. Improve data flow within the agency
2. Migration of chemistry data backlog
3. Migration of Biological data (taxon abundance)
4. Web-Enabled STORET Import Module (SIM) pilot project
5. Requirements analysis for information management

The first three tasks focus not only on a backlog of data management activities, and enhancing efficiencies in an environment with high staff turnover, but also on strengthening user acceptance of the modernized database by improving data quality and quantity.

The Web-Enabled SIM Pilot Project was designed to answer the question: Can data providers with diverse technical capability submit valid datasets to the modernized STORET directly? The answer would help determine whether the Web SIM might be used to receive data from sources external to the agency routinely. Gold Systems, Utah, hosted the Web SIM for Montana's pilot project.

The fifth task involved a requirements analysis with support from RTI. This would help lay the groundwork for the future direction of information management in support of MT DEQ's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) development process. The project team focused on integrating data analysis from STORET ver. 2.0 with the requirements and functions of the Assessment Database (ADB) ver. 2.0, in developing requirements for a new Data Review / Use Support Tool.